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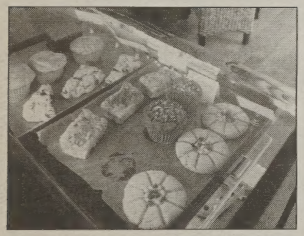

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Calendar Listings
Calendar listings are published on a space-available basis. Information is due by noon Friday for the next week's publication.

Blogs
Film: gazettefilmblog.freedomblogging.com
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COVER DESIGN

Anita Renee Langemach
The Gazette illustration

SOMETHING BEARY EXCITING IS HAPPENING AT THE ZOO.
Don't miss Teddy Bear Days at Cheyenne Mountain Zoo on July 18 and 19.
Kids 12 and under who are accompanied by a teddy bear (or other stuffed animal) will get into the Zoo for just $1. Plus they'll enjoy special event activities from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, including a Teddy Bear Clinic with free checkups for their furry friends and a "Beary Good Health" Certificate. There will also be a Teddy Bear Parade both days starting at 2:45 p.m.
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6TH 'HARRY POTTER' WEAVES STRONGEST SPELL

According to Newtonian physics, the universe is ruled by entropy, an unfortunate principle that states that, given enough time, any system will advance from order to disorder. Obviously no one informed the folks behind the Harry Potter franchise about the laws of thermodynamics. If things are supposed to deteriorate the further along one goes, why is it that the Harry Potter movies, now on their sixth excursion, just keep getting better and better?

on film

BRANDON FIBBS

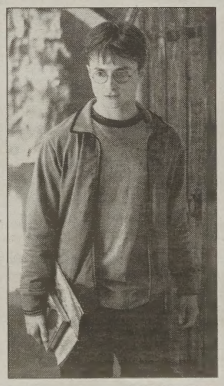
In "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince," Lord Voldemort has risen, and his minions, the Death Eaters, are wreaking havoc unchecked throughout the wizarding and muggle worlds. Back at Hogwarts school, Harry Potter (Daniel Radcliffe) and his friends Ron (Rupert Grint) and Hermione (Emma Watson) can only watch as the evil forces become increasingly brazen. It isn't much safer inside — Professor Dumbledore (Michael Gambon, superb as one half of one of cinema's best master/pupil relationships) is convinced the greatest danger lies within the castle walls. Dumbledore needs Harry's help to persuade a celebrity-obsessed but reticent teacher, potions professor Horace Slughorn (Jim Broadbent), to confess to a defining event that happened more than 20 years earlier when young Tom Riddle, the twisted boy who would grow to become the fearsome dark wizard, was his student.

For the first time in their lives, the students at Hogwarts have more to worry about than the end of the world as they know it. They have all discovered a magic of a different kind — hormones.

As love blossoms and jealousy threatens to break apart long-standing friendships, one of Hogwarts' own plots an unspeakable act of evil, one that will touch the life of every student with bitter tragedy and hasten the final showdown between good and evil.

"Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" is wickedly good. We have lived in this world for so long now and watched these characters grow into adulthood before our very eyes that the Harry Potter universe, with all its fantastical elements, is now completely believable. When our heroes begin falling in love, we trust it because they have earned it.

In the beginning, under the direction of Chris Columbus, the films were plasticized precursors: nearly one-dimensional, overly literal and without nuance. The latter films, however, are something entirely different — necessarily darker, more epic, maturing alongside their leads and infinitely more richly textured. While we owe Columbus a debt for being the vanguard of the series, it was for the best that he stepped aside. With "Prisoner of Azkaban" (which this new film most closely resembles), Alfonso Cuarón Orozco gave a luxuriant medieval historicity that showed everything that was to come.



WARNER BROS.

Daniel Radcliffe tackles danger in "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince."

But it was David Yates, a British television director, who best grasped the spirit behind J.K. Rowling's beloved books at their enchanting core. The director of the final four films, Yates is wise enough know when to take it slow. He is a master of the operatic with a keen eye for the theatrical (a vision glowingly translated by Oscar-nominated cinematographer Bruno Delbonnel and replicated in gloriously fanciful sets by production designer Stuart Craig).

Yates is an intuitive condenser of the frequently loquacious literary material. And he is hyperaware that we marvel not at the magic that occurs in broad brush strokes, but at the enchantment that permeates the small things and makes even a fantasy universe plausible.

It's not about the fun anymore. Oh, "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" still offers a great time, but whereas the initial forays were largely whimsical with occasional intrusions of peril, these final installments are pervasively creepy and, at times, genuinely frightening. The moody "Half-Blood Prince" builds slowly, piling on the menace. The foresight and wisdom of the casting directors who chose their child stars nearly 10 years ago becomes obvious now, not just with the leads, but with Tom Felton, who portrays Harry's school nemesis, Draco Malfoy. Felton does a marvelous job playing Malfoy with imperious malevolence, the sort of posh malice only an English actor can pull off.

In the end, "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" does something very clever. Just as the rise of Voldemort threatens to steal the narrative thunder from the protagonists, the filmmakers make a bold choice to never spend any amount of time alone with the bad guys. We never even see Voldemort at all. Our perspective is always attached firmly to the leads — their impressions, their point of view — ensuring our attention is never seduced away from the more important human elements of the story.

This rule is bent for only one character, Malfoy, who finds himself at a crossroads between holding onto whatever shreds of innocence he has left or fully embracing his dark side. But don't be fooled, just because you don't spend time with evil doesn't mean it isn't there.

Danger permeates everything, and you should know going in that "Half-Blood Prince" ends as a cliffhanger. The final explosive chapter (broken into two films) comes next. And if the established track record is any indication, the best is yet to come.

details

HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE
Cast: Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint, Emma Watson
Director: David Yates
Playing at: Carmike, Chapel Hills, Cinemark, Gold Hill, Hollywood, Tinseltown
Rated: PG (for scary images, some violence, language and mild sensuality)
Running time: 2 hours, 33 minutes

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BRUNO R 1:10 3:20 5:30* 7:40 9:50
ICE AGE 3: 3D [3D SURCHARGE / NO DISC] PG 1:00 3:15 5:30* 7:45 9:55
ICE AGE 3: 2D PG 1:30 4:00* 7:00 9:20
PUBLIC ENEMIES R 1:30 4:45* 9:00
TRANSFORMERS 2: REVENGE OF THE FALLEN PG13 1:30 5:00* 8:00
THE PROPOSAL PG13 1:00 4:15* 7:00 9:40
MY SISTER'S KEEPER PG13 1:30 7:00
THE HANGOVER R 4:15* 9:30
UP 3D [3D SURCHARGE / NO DISC] PG 1:55 4:45* 7:20 9:45

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I LOVE YOU BETH COOPER PG13 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
BRUNO R 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
ICE AGE 3: 3D [3D SURCHARGE / NO DISC] PG 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
THE HANGOVER R 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
ICE AGE 3: 2D PG 12:00 2:20 4:40 7:00 9:20
PUBLIC ENEMIES R 12:00 3:20 7:00 10:10
MY SISTER'S KEEPER PG13 1:30 4:20 7:10 9:45
AWAY WE GO R 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
TRANSFORMERS 2: REVENGE OF THE FALLEN PG13 12:00 3:20 6:50 10:10
THE PROPOSAL PG13 12:00 2:30 5:05 7:40 10:15
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THE PROPOSAL (PG13) 11:30 2:10 4:50 7:30 10:10
TRANSFORMERS: REVENGE OF THE FALLEN (PG13) 9:55 11:00 12:15 1:25 2:35 3:45 4:55 6:10 7:15 8:25 9:35 10:45
UP – 2D PG 10:00 12:25 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:25

NOT A DRAG

PrideFest features talk by mother of 'Hedwig' creator

BY NOEL BLACK
Special to The Gazette

Joan Mitchell — mother of John Cameron Mitchell, who wrote and directed "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" — will speak Saturday before a PrideFest screening of the film, which saw great acclaim at the Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival in 2001.

"It's my son, so I was just going to tell a little bit about his career," said Mitchell, 75. She lives in Colorado Springs with her husband, Ret. U.S. Army Maj. Gen. John Mitchell.

Asked how she and her husband reacted when they found their son was gay, Mitchell said, "I knew my son pretty well. I knew that he was a gay man. Although I don't agree with him in all things, I knew that he was extremely talented, and he's a very kind person and very generous."

Mitchell noted that she and her husband had lost two of their five children and said, "I remember when I told my husband, and he said 'I lost two sons; I'm not going to lose another one.' He was our son, and we're very proud of him."

"Hedwig and the Angry Inch," which tells a tragicomic story of a transgender singer's struggle with identity, premiered off-Broadway in 1998, catapulting the working actor and writer to some renown. A film followed three years later with Cameron Mitchell as director and star. Both have inspired a cultlike following.

The play was inspired, in part, by Cameron Mitchell's own life.

"The story is about Hedwig on both sides of the Berlin Wall, because at that time my husband was commander of the occupied forces in West Berlin," his mother said, "and my son was coming to see us and visiting the other side. So this was basically the story based on two sides of the wall, the two sides of Hedwig.

"Some of the expressions were not ones I would've used in public," Mitchell says of the film, "but it was a jolly good movie."

The screening is just one of the many high-profile events designed to draw attention to Colorado Springs' diversity, said Ryan Acker, executive director of the Pikes Peak Gay and Lesbian Community Center, which is also known as the Pride Center.

John Cameron Mitchell, shown in 2006, was nominated for a Golden Globe for his portrayal of Hedwig in the rock musical "Hedwig and the Angry Inch." Cameron Mitchell's parents live in Colorado Springs.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The city has a reputation for intolerance, he said, but the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community has been "active here since shortly after Stonewall," said Acker, referring to the 1969 riots in New York City's Greenwich Village after anti-homosexual police raids. It launched the modern gay and lesbian rights movement.

"It's the conservative nature of the city that gets the most attention, but we've had a thriving ... community for a long time, and I think it's important that people know that, as well."

Because 2009 marks the 40th anniversary of Stonewall, the Pride Center has invited Fredd "Tree" Folk, a participant in the original riots, to appear in person and will honor him onstage during the festivities.

The center will also honor Daniel Garcia and James Burge, the newly elected and openly gay president and vice president of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs' Student Government Association.

"We're really excited about that," Acker said, "because last year was the issue with spectrum, the LGBT group on campus, where the previous student body president refused to sign their request for support. They'll be cutting the ribbon for the 2009 PrideFest Parade."

Acker also pointed out that pride flags will fly on downtown light poles for the first time since the 2006 "Norman" ("Let the puppy moo") and "Sherman" puppy campaigns stirred controversy about acceptance in the community. Acker was excited that both Gov. Bill Ritter and Colorado Springs Vice Mayor Larry Small had written letters of support.

"PrideFest has grown very much over the past several years. It's more than doubled in size in just four and five years," Acker added. "It's also grown in business and sponsorship support. It's really exciting because we have people who come from Denver and outside of the state and as far away as Ohio and Florida. It shows that not only do we have something for the LGBT community, but it also brings people to the community to spend their dollars and benefit the entire city."

details

PRIDEFEST EVENTS

TODAY

8 p.m.: Gay Pride Pageant
The Underground, 110 N. Nevada Ave.
4:30 p.m.: Kick-Off Parties
- **Bijou Bar & Grill,** 2510 E. Bijou St., bijoubar.com, 473-5718
- **Club Q,** 3430 N. Academy Blvd., clubqonline.com, 570-1429
- **DJ's Bar & Grill,** 1110 E. Fillmore St., djsbarandgrill.net, 473-2425
- **The Underground,** 110 N. Nevada Ave., undergroundbars.com, 578-7771

Cost: Cover charges vary

SATURDAY

8 p.m.: Family Fun Day & Ice Cream Social
Coburn Library Earle flagpole, Colorado College
Cost: free
8:15 p.m.: Screening of John Cameron Mitchell's film, with an introduction by Joan Mitchell, the writer/director's mother
Cornerstone Building, Colorado College, 14 E. Cache La Poudre St.
Cost: free, but seating limited to 115.

SUNDAY

Colorado Spring PrideFest 2009: "1969 Stonewall Revival!"
Acacia Park/downtown
10 a.m.: Special Interfaith Pride Service
11 a.m.: DJ Dance & Parade Line-Up
Noon: 19th Annual PrideFest Parade
1-6 p.m.: Rally, live entertainment, DJ dance
3 p.m.: "Colorado's Pride Weddings"
Cost: free

Contact: ppglcc.org or 471-4429

AFTER 'HEDWIG'

Since directing "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" to much acclaim, John Cameron Mitchell wrote and directed the sexually graphic movie "Shortbus," an exploration of the culture and mores of a diverse group of sexually adventurous New Yorkers.

Cameron Mitchell was also the executive producer for the award-winning "Tarnation," John Caouette's feature-length documentary about his mother's mental illness. Cameron Mitchell also directed videos for Bright Eyes and the Scissor Sisters.

He recently finished directing "Rabbit Hole," a film adaptation of the play by David Lindsay-Abaire about the accidental death of a child and how the mother and family react to it in different ways. The film version stars Nicole Kidman.